Amount spent on Irrigation Works in Muvattupuzha and Todupuzha Taluks.

93. **MR. TARIATU KUNJITOMMAN** (*Muvattupuzha* cum *Todupuzha*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(*a*) whether, any amount has been spent on irrigation works in the taluks of Muvattupuzha and Todupuzha during the last fifteen years (1087-1101);

(*b*) if so, the amount spent and for what items of work;

(*c*) whether, in the interests of agriculture, they will deepen the several *chiras* in the two taluks which were formerly used for storing water for agricultural purposes but which are now silted up with sand;

(*d*) whether, in order to facilitate agriculture, they will restore to its original depth the *poramboke chira* in Survey No. 953/8 in Arakkuzha *pakuthi*, which was once used by the people to store up water for several agricultural centres in the locality, but which are now silted up almost to surface level; and

(*e*) whether they will repair immediately the dam constructed years ago across the canal included in Survey No. 1167/1 of the Mulavur *pakuthi*, near the Mulavur mosque?

MR. T. P. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): (*a*) and (*b*) Information has been called for.

(*c*), (*d*) and (*e*) These *chiras* and dam will be arranged to be investigated by the Temporary Irrigation Supervisor working in the Alwaye Division.

Scarcity of cultivable Land.

94. **MR. TARIATU KUNJITOMMAN** (*Muvattupuzha* cum *Todupuzha*):

(1) Will the Government be pleased to state the average number of cents of arable land per head of population in the State?

(2) Are the Government aware that, as agriculture forms the mainstay of the people in this State, and as the extent of arable land available per head is diminishing with the increase in population, the people find it difficult to get lands for agriculture?

(3) Will the Government be pleased to remove the scarcity of cultivable land by disafforesting portions of reserved forests lying in various places adjoining homesteads, and by assigning them in small blocks in favour of persons of the landless depressed classes, free of *taravila*, and in favour of the landless individuals of all communities at reduced rates of *taravila*?

MR. T. P. RAMASUBBA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): (1) Roughly, 74 cents per head of population, according to the last census.

(2) The answer is in the negative.

(3) The Government, acting on the reports of the Disafforestation Committees, are disafforesting lands for cultivation wherever possible. The *Puduval* Rules contain necessary provisions for concessional registries of lands to members of depressed classes and to the poor and landless among other classes. No hard and fast rule, as suggested by the member, can be laid down to regulate the assignment of such lands.

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